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Bike-borne hooligans are waylaying and harassing citizens in certain stretches of Bengaluru, distressed residents tell BM

BADFELLAS

'Policeman who reached spot wasn't of much help'

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Residents in the city BM spoke to said they are often facing harassment by rowdy sheeters on bikes in certain stretches of Bengaluru.

On the night of February 3, at around 7:30 pm, in front of More Hypermart, Mahadevapura, a couple was harassed and hit by two drunk men on a bike; residents claimed that instances like this are frequent in Mahadevapura.

"There were two people on a bike and they were drunk. Initially they started hitting the vehicle from the back and later they got down and started abusing us. My wife was sitting behind me on the bike, one of the bikers even hit her in the face. When he hit my wife, I got down from my bike to talk, but they started harassing us again," said Krishna*.

According to the victims, one of the policemen who reached the spot wasn't of much help either.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>

"My wife was sitting behind me on the bike; one of the bikers hit her in the face..." —Krishna, victim

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3 THINGS TO DO

01 Trek till far

Namma Trip brings an opportunity for citizens to trek to the summit of Skandagiri. Located around 70 km from Bengaluru, Skandagiri is a peaceful destination for trekkers. The fun-filled trip will start by 11 pm from the city, one can reach the base point by midnight and begin to trek at night. The trek is 8 kilometre and can be completed within 4 or 5 hours. **Where: Meeting Point Gopalan Arcade; When: February 6- March 31**

02 Theatre scenes

Written by NC Mahesh, Manavemba Saeasiyali is a 90 minute play in Kannada, which brings some outstanding performances and a message to take back. The play depicts a connection between reality and the virtual world. The conflicts between characters' perceptions lead up to lasting results. **Where: Ranga Shankara**
When: Wednesday, February 8; 7:30 pm

03 Unplugged music

One of the most happening cafes in Bengaluru brings music to feed your soul. Head to the cafe on Sunday afternoons to watch Astras, Panic and Majenta perform. Enjoy the unplugged beats and melodies that they got to offer. **Where: Hard Rock Cafe**
When: February 12 and February 26; 1 pm onwards

Sex education remains an absolute necessity

India's first sex education survey busts myths; reveals that 78% of people lack most basic knowledge about sex, stresses on robust education system

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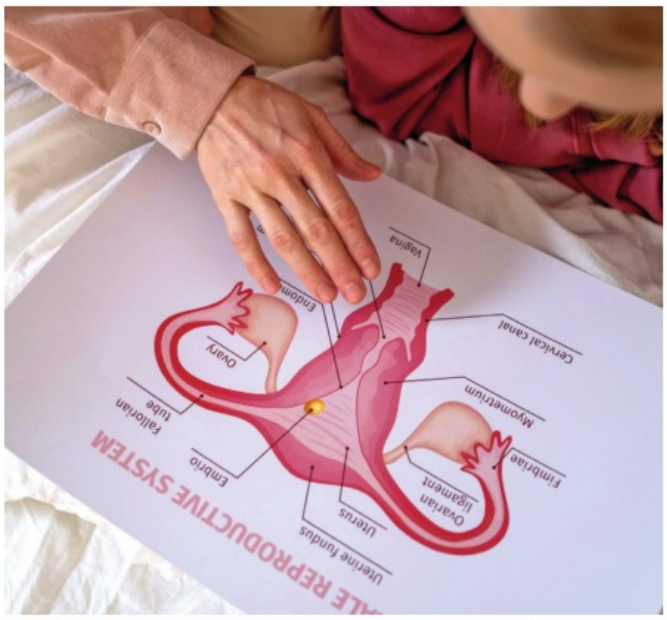
There is a debate going on in the state whether sex education should be taught in schools or not. According to a latest survey, there is a growing demand by experts to teach sexual health for school children as well.

India's first sex education survey conducted by Allo Health states that there is a growing demand for sex education among the young as it is an important tool to learn about a broad range of topics related to biological, socio-cultural, and psychological perspectives.

"A robust sex education system can go a long way in cultivating healthy sexual choices, including important choices regarding one's own health. In the Netherlands, children as young as four years of age are taught about sex and sexuality through scientific and age-appropriate content. As a result, the country has the lowest rates of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and teen pregnancies," said the report. It's time India steps up to proactively identify sexual health as an important component of overall health and wellbeing, it added.

Kanusha YK, psychotherapist and relationship expert, Allo Health told Bangalore Mirror that teenagers and young adults in schools and colleges are on their way to adulthood and they need to be equipped with adequate knowledge about sex.



The report says that a robust sex education system can go a long way in cultivating healthy sexual choices

"As they head towards playing responsible roles, knowledge about sex would help them to have healthy relationships. Sex education should be imparted to the school and college students, more so because sexual relations have been gradually overcoming social stigmas and taboos," she said.

During the survey, 84.61 per cent of the respondents acknowledged that psychological concerns like anxiety may contribute to sexual disorders.

It also revealed that 78 per cent of people lack even the most basic knowledge even though females (self-reported) fared better than their male and non-binary counterparts (self-reported).

"It was clear from the survey that even in 2023 so many myths mar the landscape of sexual health and wellness of India. Around 27.21 per cent of people believe that pulling out the penis before ejaculation was enough to prevent pregnancy. Even 26.52 per cent females believe this to be true," explained the report.

However, the fact is even the pre-ejaculate or pre-cum can contain enough semen to impregnate a person.

The second myth is that around 11.23 per cent respondents wrongly believe that they can acquire a sexually transmitted infection (STI) from a used toilet seat. This perception is even higher among females in the age group 18-25 years (12.61 per cent). While urinary tract infections may transmit through surfaces like toilet seats, most STI-causing bacteria and viruses cannot be transmitted via these surfaces. They can only be transmitted via skin-to-skin contact or the exchange of bodily fluids, it further added.

> **"Teenagers and young adults in schools and colleges are on their way to adulthood and must have knowledge about sex**
> – Kanusha YK, psychotherapist

The survey also deals with the side effects of masturbation. Around 7.67 per cent people believe that masturbation can cause acne, hair loss, impotence, memory loss, and blindness. Additionally, 13.11 per cent people think that masturbation reduces libido/sexual drive. However, the survey says that neither is true.

Meanwhile, to ensure that such myths do not flourish in India any more, Allo Health has created a free portal (allo.health/ask), where one can ask your questions and doubts related to sex, pleasure and sexual health directly to a doctor and expert.

Curtains on delightful VK Kannada Habba

The two-day VK Kannada Habba concluded successfully in the city on Sunday. Like Saturday, huge crowds thronged the Central College campus for various events.

On Saturday, visitors were vying with each other to have a glimpse of vintage cars as part of the selfie programme.

On Sunday, a vintage car rally was one of the star attractions. Additionally, the kids had a fun-filled day as they got a chance to paint with famous artist Baadal Nanjundaswamy as part of the Badal World programme.

The magic show by Uday Jadugar had the audience spellbound. Many women participated in rangoli competitions to test their talents. Musician Vasuki Vaibhav enthralled the audience with his music concert.

There were interesting and informative interaction programmes as well. According to Prof Lingaraja Gandhi, Vice-Chancellor of Bengaluru City University (BCU), he is happy to be associated with VK Kannada Habba and Central College is the apt place with rich history.

"Bengaluru Central High School was founded in 1858 and later it was affiliated with Madras University. In 1916, it became part of the University of Mysore (UoM). Later in 1964, when Bangalore University (BU) was carved out of UoM, Central College became an integral part of BU," he said.

Four years back, Central College became independent from BU and is now the pillar of BCU. Hence, this is the right place to organise Kannada Habba, he added. Many famous Kannada scholars and litterateurs have studied here. Even Kuvempu had taught at Central College for a while. It was also the prime place where a meeting of Karnataka unification was held.

Even legends like Sir M Visvesvaraya and Sir Mirza Ismail had studied at Central College. This is also the place associated with Nobel laureate Sir CV Raman as well, he informed.

The two-day programme was concluded on Sunday. The fest was fun-filled for many as it featured various activities

— Prakash VL

Shock treatment for 7,722 houses

Houses 'illegally' built below high tension power lines will have to be vacated; authorities say they will crack down on those who fail to take action

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With electrocution cases rising, the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Ltd (KPTCL) and Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) are now planning to raze houses that have been constructed beneath high tension power lines.

On Saturday, 24-year-old Abhishek came in touch with 220 KW live wires passing over his house. Due to electrocution, he had more than 90% burns and was rushed to Victoria Hospital where he breathed his last. The angry residents filed a complaint against KPTCL for negligence. However, on the other hand, the power supply company and the civic agency are saying that the residents are to be blamed as they have 'illegally' constructed houses under high tension power lines.

Bengaluru is no stranger to these kinds of incidents. There have been many houses which are directly under the high tension power lines. A senior official said that they have begun a fresh survey of such houses and are planning to issue notices to the residents.

"There are regulations related to building houses near KPTCL lines. It is a violation of KPTCL Act and such residents face a risk of criminal cases. We don't give permission for construction of such houses

Officials say that there has been an increase in such cases. An 11-year old boy was electrocuted when he tried to drag a kite near his house in RT Nagar. In December last, two boys aged 13 and 11 were electrocuted when they touched a high tension power line to catch pigeons at Nandini Layout.

Officials say that so far they have identified 7,722 'illegal' houses constructed under high tension lines in Bengaluru City and rural limits. Another official said that there have been many examples where multi-storied buildings have been constructed next to high tension lines. The residents of the top floors are in danger as they are quite close to these power lines. Even in 2019, BBMP and KPTCL had disconnected power supply to 104 properties under construction that were under high tension lines. However, the drive didn't last long.

Reacting to this, BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath said, "There are regulations related to building houses near KPTCL lines. It is a violation of KPTCL Act and such residents face the risk of criminal cases as well.

We are not providing permission for construction of such houses and the plots should be left vacant if there are power lines above. Such constructions are deemed illegal. We are asking such residents to demolish their house and if they fail to do so, then we will take action.

"According to KPTCL guidelines, the residents should get both vertical as well as horizontal clearances if their building is closer to extra high voltage lines. However, a BBMP official said, "Many residents fall prey to cheating by a few realtors who try to sell the plots under the high tension power line. In fact, most of these illegal houses have been built in revenue layouts where the residents are ignorant of the rules.

The residents say that they bought plots as they were sold the plots at a lower price. Now, the residents who have stayed in those houses for more than 10 to 15 years face the risk of eviction for feigning ignorance of the rules."

Strays send thief packing

A thief who was plotting an ambush in a village Kodati under Bellandur police station limits was attacked by stray dogs. After hearing the barking of the dogs, the thief left the bike and the drilling machine and ran off when people started to gather. The screams of the thief and the barking of the dogs are also caught on CCTV.

On the night of February 2, a thief had entered a house with a drilling machine on Sarjapur Road. He was preparing to go inside after drilling the wall of the house. But the street dogs started barking loudly and foiled his plans.

As the neighbours and family of the house came out, they saw that the thief was fleeing.

The thief had at first, damaged the CCTVs and tried to steal the cameras too. Also, he had been hanging around the house for two days before the theft. Later, on Saturday, he had made the attempts to steal twice on the same day. **BMB**

Creditors drive man to suicide

Unable to bear harassment at the hands of his creditors, a man died by suicide after leaving behind a video explaining the reasons for his steps, in Kaggalipura police station limits.

The victim has been identified as Shivraj, 33, who used to run a hair salon in Bengaluru.

This incident took place on February 3 and came to light later. According to the police, the borrowers were harassing Shivraj, who had taken a loan for land. The lenders were asking him to pay interest every week.

Renukaradhya, Dhanu and Venkatesh, who had lent money to Shivraj through a friend, took away his bike because he didn't pay back the interest. Shivraj died by suicide and made a video saying that the harassment is causing him mental torture. The deceased's wife filed a complaint in the Kaggalipura police station in this regard. **BMB**

Senior ladies' gang of thieves strike gold, for real

The Amruthahalli police are on the lookout for a gang of elderly women, who are on the run after stealing jewellery. The gang had given fake jewellery to a story and scooted with real gold.

The set of women came to a store to buy jewellery, claiming that it was for the wedding of one of their daughters. They took jewellery worth Rs 10 lakhs and gave the store some fake jewellery in exchange.

"The group bought gold jewellery worth Rs 10 lakh saying that it was for a wedding. They bought real jewellery weighing 168 grams including a ring, necklace, bracelet and a chain. In exchange, they gave fake jewellery to the store owner and escaped," said the police.

Following that, when the owner checked the jewellery again, it was found to be fake. He then immediately registered a complaint. The police are investigating the matter and are on a lookout for the gang on the basis of the CCTV footage.

Gold in a secret pocket

A 38 -year-old man, who landed at Kempegowda International Airport from Bangkok, had brought gold paste worth Rs 30 lakh in the small pocket of his custom-stitched jeans.

CRIME FILES

He has been arrested.

According to the information given by the Air Intelligence Unit of Bengaluru Customs, the smuggler from Karnataka was caught on board Thai Airways Flight TG325 on Thursday.

His short trip to Thailand raised suspicions and the customs officials checked the man after finding a suspicious stitch in his trousers. After checking, the officials noticed that he had sown small pockets in his jeans and filled them with gold paste worth Rs 30 lakh.

Recently, a woman was arrested at the Bengaluru airport for smuggling 686 grams of cocaine worth Rs 7 crore, and three people were also arrested for smuggling rare animals.

Blackmailer was hoarding private videos

As many as 208 private videos were found in the mobile phone of a man who had recently been arrested in a sextortion case.

On February 3, a techie was arrested in the city for allegedly trapping young women by promising jobs and later raping them. The accused has been identified as Dilli Prasad, a resident of Koramangala.

After interrogation, police found out that the man had 208 private videos of young women on his phone. According to the police, there are 60 videos in which Prasad himself is said to have made video calls to these women and recorded them.

The accused used to meet young women on Instagram and then blackmail them. The investigation revealed that he started to avoid these women after using them sexually and later blackmailed them.

– Ahna Prakash

Illegal parking: Is it too ingrained in B'lureans?

Parked vehicles defeat purpose of recently opened Marathahalli underpass

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Commuters complain about obstructions to smooth flow of traffic here due to vehicles being parked on the roadside; they worry that it will get even worse when larger vehicles start using this route

The recently opened Marathahalli railway underpass was meant to facilitate smooth flow of traffic to city commuters. However, it is turning out to be another bottleneck with illegal parking being started on both sides of the road.

Commuters want the road to be cleared so that they can commute without such obstructions. Atul Prasad, one of the affected commuters, told Bangalore Mirror, "The entire effort by the authorities will go in vain if this sort of parking continues. There are vehicles parked on both sides of the road, which is making it very difficult to cross this stretch.

Instead of reaching their destinations faster, the people using this stretch are getting more delayed. This is all because of the lack of space caused by illegal parking."

Residents in the area said that if the situation is not resolved soon, the damage will be irreversible. Anup Prasad, another commuter, said, "Nobody will say that this place was recently opened.

There is already so much chaos in the area. At this moment, the bottleneck is being caused by smaller vehicles. Very soon large vehicles will also start using this route, which will make the situation worse. Before that happens, the authorities should take strict action."

Commuters also told BM that they want a no parking sign in the area along with fines being imposed on the people who park their vehicle at the side of the road and are responsible for this chaos.

Naveen Sinha, also a commuter, said that there is an immediate need for a strong step to be taken against the defaulters so that they do not try to break the rules again. The people who are parking on the road should be booked and charged hefty fines by the police, he said, adding that they would only understand their mistake if that was done.

Some of the people also reported that work done at the entry and exit points of the flyover are incomplete. Rohith Srivastav, a passer-by, said, "The project is a good start, but the work is still incomplete towards the end of Kanti Sweets. Moreover, the footpath work till SJR Spencer apartment has also been left incomplete. This is adding to the chaotic situation and should be completed as soon as possible to avoid any more inconveniences."

> **"The entire effort by authorities will go in vain if this sort of parking continues. People are reaching their destinations even later** – Atul Prasad, commuter

Addressing the issue, HAL traffic police tweeted that they were regularly conducting wheel clamp drives to prevent instances of illegal parking and their staff would be instructed to conduct a drive in the area.

A Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) official said that they would try to finish the pending work as soon as possible so that the issue could be resolved.

Contractual staff commence strike 2.0

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Over 23,000 Karnataka State Health Contractual and Outsource Employees Association (KSHCOEA) will go on an indefinite strike starting today as the Department of Health and Family Welfare (HFW) and Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar has not fulfilled their long pending demands.

Demanding equal pay and job security, over thousands of workers will assemble at Freedom Park. All regular services they are involved in as a part of the department will be suspended starting today. The doctors, nurses, ground staff, and lab technicians will not carry out any activities until their demands are met, stated the employees working under the National Health Mission.

Vishwaradhya H Yamoji, president of KSHCOEA, said, "The employees have been fighting for many years and drawing the attention of the government at many levels to resolve the issues faced by them. We have urged Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and the Health Minister a number of times, but our demands have not been fulfilled. A Srinivaschari committee report was submitted to increase the salaries, make the employees permanent, and provide health insurance schemes, but the government is not coming forward to implement it."

The KSHCOEA employees pointed out during their Bengaluru Chalo strike in July 2022 that they asked for the same demands to be met and Sudhakar had given them assurances for the same. This is when they withdrew the strike. However, since then, nothing has moved on the ground.

The demands of the association include enforcement of equal pay for equal work and organisation of direct payment of wages by the government to outsourced employees. "This apart, we want the government to implement social security schemes and compensatory jobs for employee families. There should be a provision of incentives to contract employees and bonuses to outsourced employees as a rule. Transfer of employees should be allowed from district to district and insurance should be provided," said a member.

> **"We want govt to implement social security schemes and compensatory jobs for employee families. Outsourced workers should get bonuses** – KSHCOEA member

"We condemn the delay in fulfilling our demands and will take it to the streets to strike once again," said another member.

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Work needed

Srinivasa Colony

This stretch in 1st Cross, Srinivasa Colony, behind Bharat Petrol bunk has been in a horrible state for a month.

Dangerous wires

AECS Layout

Electric wires are dangling dangerously in 9th Main, A Block, AECS Layout.

Footpath blocked

Kammanahalli

This footpath in Oil Mill Road, Kammanahalli is blocked by eateries, vegetable shops, and beer bars.

Is there more to the retirement age tussle saga?

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A protest staged by a few people on January 31 in front of Bishop Cotton Boys School has once again put the Karnataka Central Diocese of Church of South India in the spotlight. After a string of allegations against Bishop Prasanna Kumar Samuel, the latest is over retirement age.

Bishop Samuel is expected to retire on February 10 in accordance with the existing norms and will continue for three more years if the amendment to retirement age proposed by the Synod comes into effect.

"A few people did not allow me to discharge my duties. They made baseless allegations against me and filed cases, but all the cases were quashed," he said.

A section of the media went abuzz when a woman lodged a complaint with Halasuru police against Bishop Samuel and Pastor Vinod Das. Police registered the FIR against the accused under sections 506 (criminal intimidation), 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention), 504 (intentionally insulting), 354 (assault of criminal force to woman) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) 1860, and section 8, 9(F) and 10 of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012.

The 50th Additional City Civil and Sessions Judge, Bengaluru issued summons on December 12, 2017 to the Bishop. However, the High Court quashed the summons.

The latest allegation is that the Bishop has been using his influence to extend the retirement age of Bishops and Pastors from 67 to 70 years.

Bishop Samuel dismisses allegations of using influence to extend retirement age, claims he is being targeted

A case was registered at Vidyanagar Police Station by an advocate against five people, including Samuel and Das on January 13.

According to a complaint by Vijaykumar V Dandin to Vidyanagar Police, three people, including two persons claiming to be advocates, barged into the worship hall and disturbed the service.

Sources informed that a few people approached the HC for a stay on conducting a special council meeting of Karnataka Central Diocese, but the meeting held in Hubballi is related to the 37th Session of Synod and the meeting held at Bishop Cottons School is connected to the executive committee meeting.

"I am a law-abiding citizen. I will obey the court order and Synod direction. If the Synod directs me to continue as Bishop until I attain 70 years, I will. If the court says that amendment to the retirement age is wrong, I will go home," said Samuel.

Pastor Das described the ongoing controversy as the handiwork of a 'few disgruntled elements that got defeated in the election'. "They have been making false allegations and misguiding the media," he said.

Meanwhile, Cubbon Park Police have registered an FIR on February 1, 2023 based on a complaint by Govinda Raja N, a security guard, against John Rajan, Stella Joyce, and others.

Vendors need replacement, not mindless displacement

Streetside hawkers may be inconveniencing walkers, but where else do they operate from?

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Roadside hawkers are still waiting for dedicated street vending zones where they can run shop from

Pedestrians and hawkers have been at loggerheads over the use of footpaths. Street vendors are forced to operate from pavements due to delays in implementation of street vending zones by the town vending committee, say Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) welfare officials.

On Netaji Road, residents are opposed to street vendors operating from footpaths. They alleged that the former are operating late into the night and leaving behind garbage. They also claimed that parked vehicles have been choking the road during evenings.

BBMP officials said that vendors were operating without vending certificates. Three months back, the Chief Commissioner visited the area and cleared the footpath a few metres from their current location.

According to the Street Vendors Act, 2014, vendors cannot be evicted without being provided alternative spaces (vending zones). It also raised the question of who monitors the activities of hawkers.

Citizens across the city say that the problem is not limited to traditional street vendors. They say that the issue of footpath encroachment should be extended to commercial establishments operating without parking provisions and food trucks settling on the roadsides as well.

A resident of Kalyan Nagar, Christopher, said that small stalls run by disadvantaged communities are targeted while big commercial establishments go scot-free. "Action needs to be taken on large commercial establishments and street vendors will subsequently follow the rules. Street vendors provide essential and affordable services to citizens, but despite having sufficient space, commercial establishments encroach roads," he said.

Vignan Gowda, a resident of Sanjayanagara said that the DULT pedestrian project costing nearly Rs 10 crore was slowly taken over by vendors. "Along the stretch, there used to be about 100 vendors. Now there are 300. Senior citizens struggle to use footpaths," he said.

Vishnu Prasad, a resident of Bellandur noted that even after drives conducted to evict vendors, they keep returning to their spot again. The welfare department is also in the process of conducting a fresh survey of street vendors across the city. There are two lakh street vendors in the city (BBMP data), but only 25,000 were covered in the last survey in 2017, according to Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission.

Vinay Sreenivasa, Alternative Law Forum, said many urban middle-class and poor families are dependent on street vendors. Street Vendors Act, 2014 and the Supreme Court order (2013) stated that hawkers have the right to operate on footpaths provided there is space for pedestrians. Only 25000 people were covered and around 20,000 were given identity cards. With rising concerns over third-party involvement, the association wants the survey to be done in-house, he added.

"Until zoning is completed, vendors cannot be evicted. However, Traffic police officials continue to evict them without following procedures," Sreenivasa further said.

Certificates issued following the first survey expired in February 2023. Despite multiple letters to the BBMP Special Commissioner (Welfare) Raju regarding the extension of the certificates until the survey is completed, there has reportedly been no action.

> **"Until zoning is completed, vendors cannot be evicted. However, traffic police continue to do so**
>
> – Vinay Sreenivasa, Alternative Law Forum

"The proposal and DPR for the vending zones have to be prepared by the zonal commissioner level. After each Town Vending Committee (TVC) from each zone completes the task, it needs to be submitted to the Karnataka Skill Development Authority (KSDA. While there is no head for the TVC, a redressal committee is to be formed. It has been postponed until the mayor is instated," said Raju.

IN BRIEF

Addressing gap in women's healthcare

ORIGYN (Oasis of Recognised and Innovative Practices in Gynecology), a virtual meet bringing women healthcare experts from around the world together on a single platform, kicked off on Friday. The two-day programme is hosted by ARTIST for HER in collaboration with knowledge partners FIGO (International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics) and FOGSI (Federation of Obstetric and Gynecological Societies of India), with the goal of bringing global healthcare leaders together on one platform to discuss differences in practice between the west and the east and to highlight the ground realities in economically disadvantaged countries.

Dr Hema Divakar, CEO of ARTIST for Her, said, "We think that collaborating and exchanging knowledge will help women and families globally. Although there are centres of excellence in poor nations, not every woman has access to the finest practices because of challenges with access, affordability, and awareness." —BMB

Sivasakthi reps B'luru' power

FC striker Sivasakthi Narayanan has been awarded as the Emerging Player of the Month for January 2023 for his spectacular performances across his side's four wins in January.

The youngster was a pivotal figure in each of the Blues' four wins, registering four goals and one assist in the process. Sivasakthi fought his way into the starting lineup under head coach Simon Grayson and since then, has been reaping rewards with his goal contributions.

Currently, on a four-game winning streak, his side has leapfrogged into the sixth position, in contention for the playoffs berth alongside Odisha FC who share the same number of points.

Nine out of 15 experts chose Sivasakthi as the top pick. In second position was Chennaiyin FC's Vincy Barretto who was picked out by one expert as their first choice.. —ANI

Bengaluru cycles in high gear

Free-cycling lessons are being encouraged through various campaigns in city

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

To promote green and non-motor commuting in the city, free cycling lessons are being provided to women in Bengaluru as a part of the 'Bengaluru moving' campaign that aims to promote sustainable mobility in the city in association with Pedal in Tandem, a cycling company.

"For a longer-term purpose, we want to see more people on bicycles and non-motor transportation and for some reason, many women as well as men have not learned how to ride a bicycle so far. So we have put together a programme that is structured to teach these people some basics about cycling," said Dheeraj Subramanian, founder of Pedal in Tandem.

The concept of cycle schools was started back in 2021 and the group has trained more than 100 women over the years.

"The latest series of cycle schools is for this month. We had one session on Sunday, February 5, and had another one in January. In these two sessions, we have trained a dozen women how to ride a bicycle and we will be conducting a ride for these women on February 19," he added.

The theme for these free cycling sessions this year was 'Women and caregivers', which aimed to promote sustainable mobility among the community. The execution of the programme was carried out by Dheeraj Subramanian and Poojya Basavaraj, a Bangalore-based couple and founders of Pedal in Tandem.

Cycling will promote green and non-motor commuting in the city

Another similar campaign called 'Pedalshalle' is all set to launch in the city to train and get more people on cycles. This would be carried out by the Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) and Karnataka Bicycle Dealers Association (KBDA) in association with Decathlon.

"We have already trained 10 trainers for this programme and five more are getting trained under Pedalshalle. We will be rolling it out throughout the city in at least 15 separate locations. It is a training programme for everyone, not limited to just women and children," informed Sathya Sankaran, Bicycle Mayor of Bengaluru.

"I think in the coming year, we will see a lot of cycle training taking place for people. It is very essential today to make people more confident and get them out on the roads. This will be a certified training program so people will be more confident to ride on the roads. We are aiming to train at least 500 people in a year and make them more comfortable with the non-motor modes of transport," he added.

The programme is expected to be launched in Bengaluru by the end of this month or early March. After its launch and trial in Bengaluru, it would be extended to other parts of Karnataka also, he explained.

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personal

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I Ayesha W/O, Mohammed Naseer Khan R/o #23,8th Cross, Vijaya Bank Colony, Basavana Pura Main Road,kr Puram, Bangalore-560036 have changed my name to Ayesha Siddiqua for all purposes.

I, Jyotsna Vernekar r/o 36/19 17crs Lakkasandra -Blr - 30 has changed my son's name to Parth Jyotsna

I, Jyotsna Uday Vernekar r/o 36/19 17 crs Lakkasandra-Blr-30 has changed my name to Jyotsna Vernekar

I, Riya Uday Vernekar r/o 36/19 17crs 2nd main Lakkasandra-Blr 30 has changed my name to Riya Vernekar

PM to inaugurate India Energy Week in city

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the India Energy Week (IEW) 2023 on Monday in Bengaluru. During the programme, the Prime Minister will participate in a roundtable interaction with global oil and gas CEOs. He will also launch multiple initiatives in the field of green energy.

The IEW, which is a G20 event, will be held between February 6 to 8, in Bengaluru. It is aimed at showcasing India's rising prowess as an energy transition powerhouse.

The event will see the presence of more than 30 ministers from across the world.

Over 30,000 delegates, 1,000 exhibitors and 500 speakers will gather to discuss the challenges and opportunities of India's energy future. Meanwhile Modi will launch the E20 fuel at 84 retail outlets of oil marketing companies in 12 states. **IANS**

Are rowdies at large?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"After the assault, we called the cops and the police personnel on patrol duty approached us. The policemen were from Mahadevapura police station. Later, we were approached by some local leaders who asked us to settle the matter there and not to file a police complaint. Further on, we were sent back by the people. We have been living here for more than 10 years; we have never witnessed anything of this sort. This is the very first time it's happening and we are in shock," he added.

Another resident, Shanker*, said that people are afraid to approach the police because they don't want to get into any trouble.

"Very recently, while I was coming from Mahadevapura flyover, I was approached by a group of rowdies, who deliberately collided with my vehicle and asked me for money. I didn't approach the police, fearing that I might be asked to pay a bribe or the rowdies will have some connection and I will land up in trouble," he said.

Meanwhile, Whitefield division DCP S Girish said the police department is taking measures such as keeping stations open all night to ensure that such cases are dealt with at once and future instances of the kind are prevented.

"Law and order measures can be taken after the victims lodge a complaint. We are only made aware of such incidents when complaints are lodged. However, the police department is also taking measures through the beat system, Hoysala patrol, keeping police stations open 24X7 for the convenience of the people and so forth. Steps are also taken on a case to case basis," the DCP told BM.

(*name changed)

Dig gigs continue to haunt city

BBMP reiterates that roads can only be dug up in case of emergencies

Melvin Mathew
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@timesgroup.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

File photo of BWSSB workers at work on a busy road in the city

Despite instructions from the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to not dig roads, residents from various parts of Bengaluru continue to see the same. The Palike has clarified that the order does not cover emergency diggings and mentions three scenarios where road diggings are permitted.

Following public ire over pothole-filled and patch-worked roads, the agency issued instructions to not allow any road digging on newly asphalted roads. They are currently in the process of asphalting 2,000 km of roads to maintain the city's infrastructure and fill up potholes. In case a road is dug-up, assistant executive engineers, junior engineers, and assistant engineers are to be held responsible for restoration and disciplinary action can be taken against them if they fail to do so. The BBMP also stated that the measure is being taken up as other agencies that need to dig roads have completed the majority of the work.

BBMP Engineer-in-Chief, BS Prahalad, said, "During emergency cases, road digging will be permitted. We have electrical cables, water lines, and sanitary lines running through the city. If there is a leakage, we need to provide permission, otherwise we risk spoiling the road completely. In such cases, we have to permit newly asphalted roads to be dug up as well."

Issues like water leakages, faults in the KPTCL line, road cutting for buildings, and sanitary blockages will be categorised as emergencies. However, Prahalad clarified that agencies still have not been permitted to lay down new lines.

You are warned

"We are still not providing permission to lay down lines in newly asphalted roads. We have given multiple warnings in this regard to agencies and urged them to complete the work before asphalting. In the case of a new building requesting a line, the issue cannot be ignored," he said.

On February 4, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) dug open a newly asphalted road in Mahalakshmi Layout on the same day. BBMP officials said it was an emergency due to water leakage. "Just an hour after the road was asphalted, the road was broken by BWSSB. Their officials said that the valve had an issue and the road had to be broken. There is no coordination between agencies regarding digging work," said a resident.

> **We have cables, water and sanitary lines running through the city. In case of leakage, we must give permission**
> –BS Prahalad, BBMP

The BBMP, however, clarified that the road was not dug up and only the asphalt was broken.

A road in Ullalu ward in Kengeri was also recently dug up for laying down underground cables by a private agency. Residents say that the digging also resulted in the breaking of water lines and has caused major inconveniences for them.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Change the channel?

As Karnataka is heading to elections, TV politics is hotting up. Hebbal MLA Byrathi Suresh has been distributing TVs to people in his constituency. These TVs have a catch-- the landing page will display Suresh's picture before the viewer moves on to a channel. When journos questioned him, Suresh said he had wanted to donate TVs for a long time and he had also invited applications from eligible beneficiaries and sp he has now started distributing TVs.

Role reversal

Chief Minister Basavaraj S Bommai had visited his alma mater recently as a chief guest. The master of the ceremony asked the CM which seat he enjoyed the most -- sitting on the dais in front of the students of the college where he studied or his college days when he used to sit in the audience. Without mincing words, Bommai said that he always preferred to sit among students as he still feels that a student's life was a golden life.

Siblings & snow

As the Bharat Jodo yatra concluded, there were visuals of Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Vadra having fun games with snow in Kashmir. In fact, these were not the only siblings who had so much fun. KPCC president DK Shivakumar and his brother Bengaluru Rural MP DK Suresh were also seen playing with snow and Shivakumar was seen placing snow on his brother's head. DKS told journos that this was the first time he was witnessing snowfall and so he could not control himself but just had to indulge in fun games with his brother.

Tower of protest

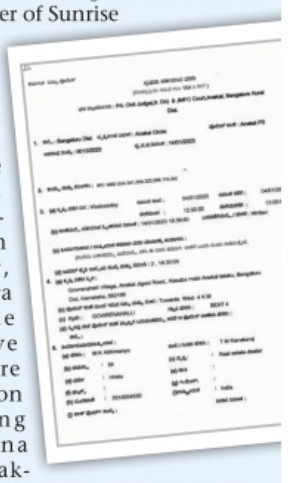
Police are finding it tough to 'protect' mobile towers from multiple threats. Apart from theft, the police are finding it tough to restrict people climbing onto them to register their protest. Recently, a father along with his two young kids climbed up a mobile tower after a fight with his wife over a property dispute. Police had a tough time convincing the trio to come down. Later speaking to journalists, police said that they want to convey to people that they won't take such cases lightly and will file cases if anyone tries to climb mobile towers to settle their personal score or for protest.

FIR against former MLC, kin over land deal

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesgroup.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Indiranagar Police have registered a first information report (FIR) against former MLC R Shankar's wife and son based on a complaint lodged by Prabhavathi M, a resident of Domlur.

According to the complaint lodged by Prabhavathi, the accused cheated her by selling off 23 sites without her consent and signature. According to Prabhavathi, she is the partner of Sunrise Group, a real estate company started by Rajanna B, MS Dhanalakshmi, wife of Shankar, Jyothir Tejomay S, son of Shankar, and S Chandra Prakash. The partners have agreed to share profit or loss on the following basis: Rajanna 15%, Dhanalakshmi 15%, Jyothir 15%, Prabhavathi 15%, and Chandraprakash 40%. As per the Partnership Deed executed on February 4, 2020, it is mandatory to have the signatures of all the partners to sell or to receive sale consideration, to execute sale deed/s etc. in respect of the properties of the Sunrise Group and to appear before the Sub-Registrar for execution or admission of sale deed and to execute sale agreements and sale deeds in respect of the group shall be signed by all the partners.



> **23 plots sold off without woman's consent, in violation of partnership agreement terms**

However, the rules of the Partnership Deed are allegedly violated by Rajanna, Dhanalakshmi and Jyothir. According to the FIR, all the partners have bought four acres land at Bommanahalli to develop a layout – Sun City. Meanwhile, Chandraprakash voluntarily retires from the partnership of Sunrise Group. His retirement allows the other partners to enter into a partnership deed on March 18, 2021 and the four partners (Rajanna, Dhanalakshmi, Jyothir and Prabhavathi) have to share profit or loss at 25% each.

According to the FIR, Prabhavathi came to know about the sale of 23 sites without her consent. "I got the documents of sale deeds from the Sub-Registrar Office by filing a RTI application. They sold 23 sites of the Sun City Layout without my signature. They opened three bank accounts in their names for financial transactions," Prabhavathi said.

How's the weather?

...Just how this UK mega-lab wants; it is creating the weather to test homes of future

The thermometer sinks below zero as a blizzard of fine snow descends on two houses freshly built inside a massive laboratory in northern England. Despite the icy conditions, the two energy-efficient homes remain cosy and warm due to their use of cutting-edge heating and insulation technology.

Welcome to Energy House 2.0 -- a science experiment designed to help the world's housebuilders slash carbon emissions, save energy and tackle climate change.

The project, based in a laboratory resembling a giant warehouse on Salford University campus near the centre of Manchester, opened last month.

Rain, wind, sunshine and snow can be recreated in temperatures ranging from 40 degrees Celsius to -20C, operated from a control centre.

"What we've tried to achieve here is to be able to replicate the weather conditions that would be experienced around 95 percent of the populated Earth," Professor Will Swan, head of energy house laboratories at the university, told AFP.

The facility, comprising two chambers that can experience different weather at the same time, will test types of housing from all over the world "to understand how we deliver their net-zero and energy-efficient homes", he added.

The two houses, which are quintessentially British and constructed by firms with UK operations, will remain in place for a few years.

Other builders will then be able to rent space in the lab to put their own properties under the spotlight.

The project's first house was built by UK property firm Barratt Developments and French materials giant Saint-Gobain. It is clad with decorative bricks over a frame of wood panels and insulation, with solar panels on the roof.

Scientists are examining the efficiency of several different types of heating systems, including air-source heat pumps.

Snow is pictured from inside a room of one of two houses built to develop future heating solutions at Energy House 2.0 at Salford University

In the living room, a hot-water circuit is located along the bottom of the walls, while further heat is provided via infra-red technology in the moulding and from a wall panel.

Mirrors also act as infra-red radiators while numerous sensors monitor which rooms are in use.

Residents will be able to manage the technology via one single control system similar to Amazon's voice-activated Alexa interface.

> **"What we've tried to achieve here is to be able to replicate the weather conditions that would be experienced around 95 percent of the populated Earth**

Builders estimate the cutting-edge tech will mean that the energy bill will be just one quarter of what the average UK home currently pays, a boon to customers reeling from sky-high energy prices.

It will also make an important contribution to Britain's efforts to reach zero carbon emissions by 2050 to combat climate change.

A parliamentary report found that, in 2019, 17 percent of heating emissions from buildings came from homes -- making their contribution similar to all the petrol and diesel cars driving on Britain's roads.

Environmental campaigners have long called on the UK government to increase energy efficiency and insulation support for existing homes across Britain.

"One of the key technologies that we're trying on this house is almost like a building management system for residential buildings," said Tom Cox, UK technical director at Saint-Gobain.

"It's almost like the Alexa of the home energy system -- and that can be automated as much as the occupant wants."

And now with their mega-laboratory, scientists and companies no longer have to wait for extreme swings in the weather.

"We can test a year's worth of weather conditions in a week," added Cox.

The "ultimate goal is to create that environment which is comfortable and cost effective and commercially viable to deliver", added Cox. "At the same time (we are) addressing the sustainability issues that we have in construction." **AFP**

1 in 4 users unaware of crypto cybercrime risks: Report

Nearly one in four users are unaware of crypto cybercrime risks, while half of the users are hit by crypto cybercrime, a new report has shown. According to the cybersecurity firm Kaspersky, just 25 per cent of those surveyed felt well-informed about potential cryptocurrency cyberthreats, while 23 per cent had no information at all.

The report also discovered that nearly half (49 per cent) of the respondents had been affected by cryptocurrency crime in some way, with 40 per cent of crypto owners did not believe current protection systems for cryptocurrency were effective.

"This survey emphasises the need for increased awareness and education about the potential risks faced by cryptocurrency owners. As the adoption of digital assets continues to grow, it is essential for individuals to take appropriate measures to protect themselves from cyber threats," said Vitaly Kamluk, Head of the APAC unit, Kaspersky's Global Research and Analysis Team.

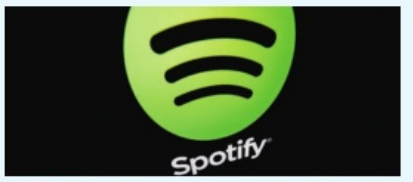
Moreover, cyber threats such as virtual theft and scams, were among the most frequently mentioned negative aspects of cryptocurrency use, with 27 per cent and 26 per cent of respondents citing them as their top concerns, respectively.

The report also mentioned that nearly 38 per cent of respondents were unaware they could become a target of crypto threats -- even if they do not own cryptocurrency.

When it comes to market management, the report added that 54 per cent would like to see regulation by an independent authority, while 44 per cent agree cryptocurrency regulation should be carried out by banks. **-IANS**

BITS & BYTES

FROM MUSIC TO HEALTH



Music streaming platform Spotify founder Daniel Ek has launched a new startup called Neko Health based in Sweden, which specialises in providing body scans powered by artificial intelligence (AI).

Daniel Ek founded the company with Hjalmar Nilsonne, who is a co-founder and CEO of Neko Health, with the vision to create a healthcare system that can help people stay healthy through preventive measures and early detection. The startup was launched after four years of research and product development, reports Sifted. "Early detection and prevention of serious illness would mean that we can avoid the human suffering and the high social costs," Nilsonne said. **IANS**

BETTING APPS FROM CHINA TO BE BANNED

India's Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has begun a process to ban and block 138 betting apps and 94 loan lending apps with Chinese links, ANI reported on Sunday, citing sources.

The Ministry of Home Affairs recommended the MeitY ban and block these apps by the coming week under Section 69 of India's IT law, the report said.

The IT law allows the government to block public access to content in the interest of national security, among other reasons. Orders issued under the section are generally confidential in nature. **Reuters**

TECH SECTOR CUT MOST JOBS IN US

Led by the technology sector, US-based employers announced 102,943 cuts in January, a massive 136% increase from the 43,651 cuts announced in December, a new report has said. It is 440% higher than the 19,064 cuts announced in the same month in 2022, according to a report by global outplacement and business and executive coaching firm, Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc. The technology sector announced the most cuts with 41,829, 41%of all cuts, in January. From Amazon to Meta, from Alphabet to Google, many tech company laid off employees.. **IANS**

HEALTH TIP: A stressful life can affect your cardiac health and lead to mental disorders such as depression and anxiety too

Make sure you undergo regular health check-ups so that you can take preventive measures or doctors can diagnose an illness early on

When critical thinking isn't enough, we need to beat information overload

Art of critical ignoring

The web is an informational paradise and a hellscape at the same time.

A boundless wealth of high-quality information is available at our fingertips right next to a ceaseless torrent of low-quality, distracting, false and manipulative information.

The platforms that control search were conceived in sin. Their business model auctions off our most precious and limited cognitive resource: attention.

These platforms work overtime to hijack our attention by purveying information that arouses curiosity, outrage, or anger. The more our eyeballs remain glued to the screen, the more ads they can show us, and the greater profits accrue to their shareholders.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, all this should take a toll on our collective attention. A 2019 analysis of Twitter hashtags, Google queries, or Reddit comments found that across the past decade, the rate at which the popularity of items rises and drops has accelerated.

In 2013, for example, a hashtag on Twitter was popular on average for 17.5 hours, while in 2016, its popularity faded away after 11.9 hours. More competition leads to shorter collective attention intervals, which lead to ever fiercer competition for our attention – a vicious circle.

To regain control, we need cognitive strategies that help us reclaim at least some autonomy and shield us from the excesses, traps and information disorders of today's attention economy.

Critical thinking is not enough

The textbook cognitive strategy is critical thinking, an intellectually disciplined, self-guided and effortful process to help identify valid information. In school, students are taught to closely and carefully read and evaluate information. Thus equipped, they can evaluate the claims and arguments they see, hear, or read. No objection. The ability to think critically is immensely important.

But is it enough in a world of information overabundance and gushing sources of disinformation? The answer is "No" for at least two reasons.

First, the digital world contains more information than the world's libraries combined. Much of it comes from unvetted sources and lacks reliable indicators of trustworthiness. Critically thinking through all information and sources we come across would utterly paralyse us because we would never have time to actually read the valuable information we painstakingly identify.

Second, investing critical thinking in sources that should have been ignored in the first place means that attention merchants and malicious actors have been gifted what they wanted, our attention.

Critical ignoring for information management

So, what tools do we have at our disposal beyond critical thinking? In our recent article, we – a philosopher, two cognitive scientists and an education scientist – argue that as much as we need critical thinking we also need critical ignoring.

Critical ignoring is the ability to choose what to ignore and where to invest one's limited attentional capacities.

Critical ignoring is more than just not paying attention – it's about practising mindful and healthy habits in the face of information overabundance.

We understand it as a core competence for all citizens in the digital word.

Without it, we will drown in a sea of information that is, at best, distracting and, at worst, misleading and harmful.

Tools for critical ignoring

Three main strategies exist for critical ignoring. Each one responds to a different type of noxious information.

In the digital world, self-nudging aims to empower people to be citizen "choice architects" by designing their informational environments in ways that work best for them and that constrain their activities in beneficial ways. We can, for instance, remove distracting and irresistible notifications.

We may set specific times in which messages can be received, thereby creating pockets of time for concentrated work or socialising. Self-nudging can also help us take control of our digital default settings, for instance, by restricting the use of our personal data for purposes of targeted advertisement.

Lateral reading is a strategy that enables people to emulate how professional fact checkers establish the credibility of online information.

It involves opening up new browser tabs to search for information about the organisation or individual behind a site before diving into its contents. Only after consulting the open web do skilled searchers gauge whether expending attention is worth it.

Before critical thinking can begin, the first step is to ignore the lure of the site and check out what others say about its alleged factual reports. Lateral reading thus uses the power of the web to check the web.

Most students fail at that task. Past studies show that, when deciding whether a source should be trusted, students (as well as university professors) do what years of school has taught them to do – they read closely and carefully. Attention merchants as well as merchants of doubt are jubilant.

Online, looks can be deceiving. Unless one has extensive background knowledge it is often very difficult to figure out that a site, filled with the trappings of serious research, peddles falsehoods about climate change or vaccinations or any variety of historical topics, such as the Holocaust.

Instead of getting entangled in the site's reports and professional design, fact checkers exercise critical ignoring. They evaluate the site by leaving it and engage in lateral reading instead.

The do-not-feed-the-trolls heuristic targets online trolls and other malicious users who harass, cyberbully or use other antisocial tactics.

Trolls thrive on attention, and deliberate spreaders of dangerous disinformation often resort to trolling tactics.

> **"Investing critical thinking in sources that should have been ignored in the first place means that attention merchants have been gifted what they wanted: our attention**

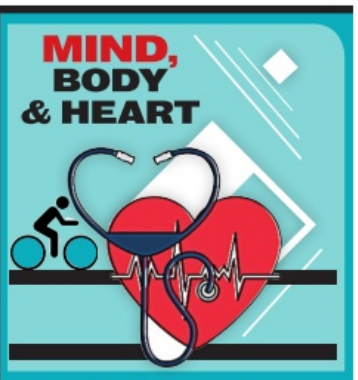
One of the main strategies that science denialists use is to hijack people's attention by creating the appearance of a debate where none exists.

The heuristic advises against directly responding to trolling. Resist debating or retaliating.

Of course, this strategy of critical ignoring is only a first line of defence. It should be complemented by blocking and reporting trolls and by transparent platform content moderation policies including debunking.

These three strategies are not a set of elite skills. Everybody can make use of them, but educational efforts are crucial for bringing these tools to the public.

— Ralph Hertwig and Anastasia Kozyreva (The Conversation)



All problems solved

Dear Coleen

I'm concerned about whether my husband is getting emotionally involved with a female colleague and if I need to do anything about it. We've been together for eight years and have two young children. Although I'd say our relationship is good, we have had major fall-outs in the past over his flirting with other women.
Recently, I found some emails on his personal account from one of his female workmates. To be honest, they were all to do with problems she's having at work, but the tone of his replies is definitely overfamiliar. He started one email with "Hi beautiful".
I haven't spoken to him about these emails, mostly because I'll have to admit I've been snooping but, also, I don't really know what to say/ In the past, he's always made me feel petty or stupid when I've brought up his flirting. Am I going loopy? I think his focus should be here at home with us and he shouldn't be looking for ways to get closer to other women. Please help.

COLEEN SAYS

Well, these emails are on his personal account and not his work one and "Hi beautiful" is not very professional.
I think you need a bigger conversation about your relationship and how his behaviour generally makes you feel – insecure and worried. There's obviously a trust issue here that needs to be addressed, so in terms of the "snooping" you have to be honest that you don't trust him and that's why you're checking his emails.
Putting off the conversation isn't going to help. Your mind will keep ending up at the worst-case scenario, so address it now. I'd also suggest counselling to get to the root of these trust issues and how you take your relationship forward.

—Coleen Nolan, Daily Mirror

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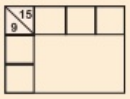
SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

Two number are in the ratio 3:5. If 9 is subtracted from the numbers, the ratio becomes 12:23. The numbers are:

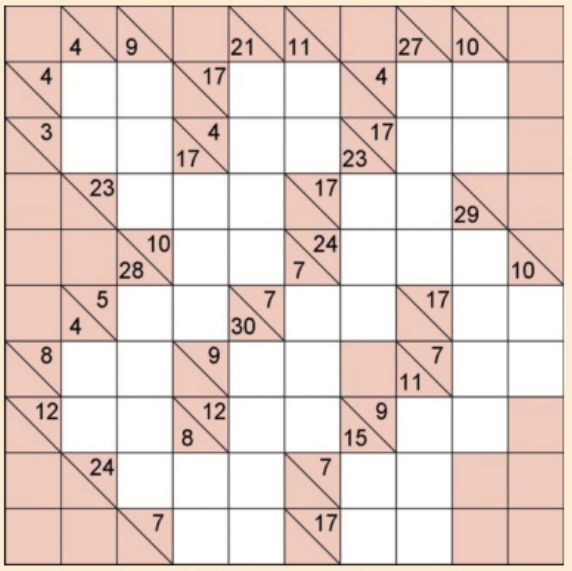
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

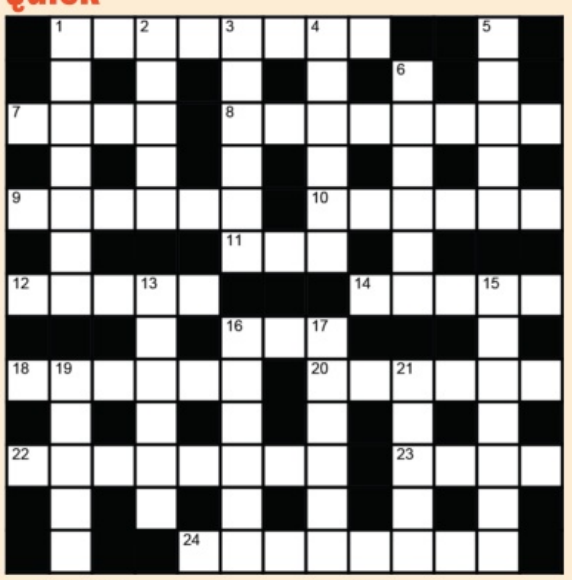


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Rebukes (5,3)
7 Equitable or blonde (4)
8 Strove to equal (8)
9 Male or female (6)
10 Chose (6)
11 Distress call (3)
12 Old capital city of Japan (5)
14 Cut dramatically (5)
16 Marvellous (3)
18 Surface crust on antique vase (6)
20 Eight musical notes (6)
22 Segregates or separates (8)
23 Ladies' fingers (4)
24 Recklessly wasteful (8)

DOWN

1 Disastrous event (7)
2 Tempted (5)
3 Cutting implements (6)
4 Dowdy women (6)
5 Female relative (5)
6 The unit of gas pressure (6)
13 Ordeals (6)
15 Many (7)
16 Hesitate, waver (6)
17 ___ over : dominated over or subjugated? (6)
19 National park home to tigers, panthers and elephants (5)
21 Leather strap (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: H EQUALS S

E HTRRIHZ QITY HZJTYEMQ EH QITY HTJJZHH KWN QITY BZQ MI HTJJZHH EH QITY OEWZ RKDKMZ.–FIYNIW YKLHKQ

Linemaro

I can't sing, but if I did, I would serenade you

Mindchow

Happiness is to be dissolved into something complete and great

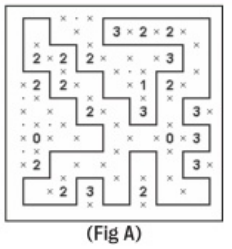
Joke of the day

I am sorry I got angry and said a lot of things I meant but shouldn't have said

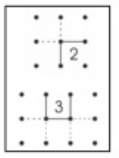
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

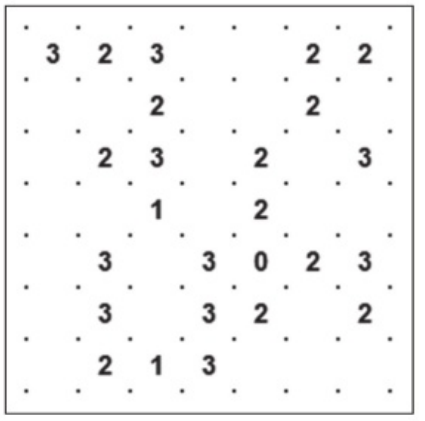


(Fig B) Not Allowed

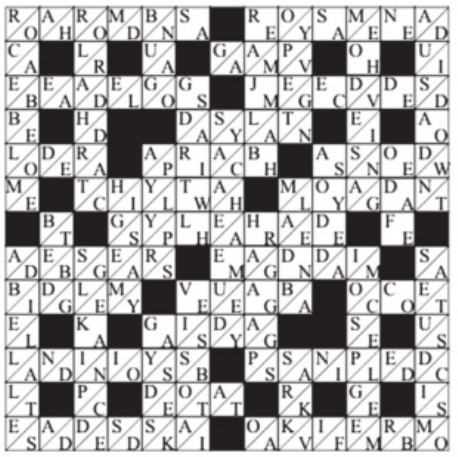
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5 P
6				
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

1 Tamps; 6 Iliac;
7 Tra-la; 8 Ore he;
9 Up Rod

DOWN

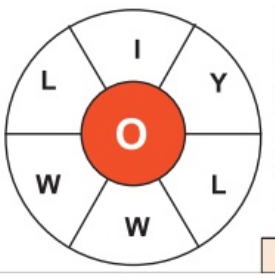
1 Scrap; 2 Litre;
3 Loath; 4 Ma IOU;
5 Padre

Mensapuzzle

What number should replace the question mark?

42	15	14
56	35	8
36	?	4

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

02 Average; 03 Good; 04 Outstanding

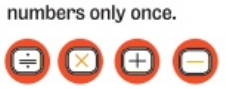
SudokuChallenge

3								8
	2			3	8			
		9		1	2	3		
5			8			9		2
2				9				3
1		4			5			6
		5	2	8		6		
			4	5			1	
8								7

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

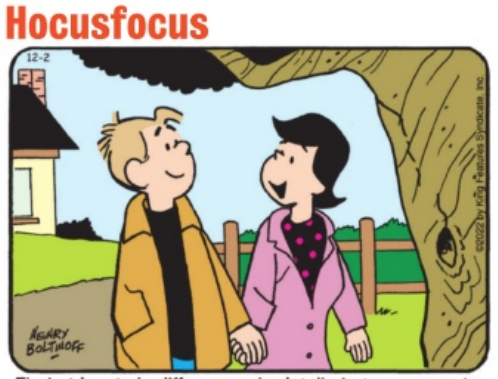


Easy = 4
2 2 4 8

Medium = 9
3 3 5 8

Hard = 15
5 6 9 5

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Arm is longer. 2. Fence post is moved. 3. Hole in tree is larger. 4. Chimney is shorter. 5. Fence post is taller. 6. Zipper is replacing buttons.

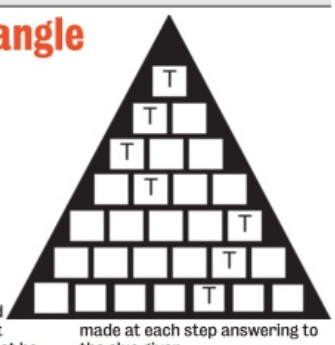
Riddler

Replace each word or words in parentheses with a one-word synonym to decipher a common holiday. (The first holiday is only one word long. The second and third are two words long.)

1. (Right of north) (she)
2. (Hotel) D (ink stick) (boogie) (24 hours)
3. (Work) (24 hours)

Alpha triangle

1 Terabyte
2 Bye!
3 Keyboard key
4 Wild try
5 Brute
6 Meadow sounds
7 Wears away



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

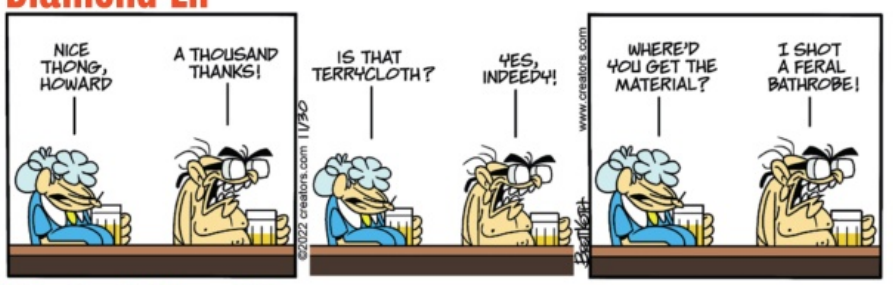
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Redeye by Mel Casson

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil



Hart of the city

Crankshaft

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today you are blessed by the moon. You can make new plans in terms of business. Your colleagues may help you implement your plans. You may recover stuck money from your clients, which may boost liquidity in business. After late evening, you may feel some depression. This may affect sound sleep.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today you have control over your opponents and hidden enemies. Decisions in legal matters may be in your favour. Your seniors may be happy because of your hard work. You may get new responsibilities in terms of promotions. Singles may find their soulmate.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today you may be happy. You may plan to buy some creative items, which may improve your lifestyle. You may also spend money on your friends and family members. You can plan to make investments in assets. Singles may find a good match. Lovebirds may enjoy important moments.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today you may be seeking peace of mind. The moon's blessings may help you focus on yourself. Investments in property and other assets are advised to be avoided. You may have some happy moments in your domestic life, but it is advised to avoid arrogance and ego with your spouse. Disputes with your business partner are likely to be resolved.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today you may be polite with the people around you. Many problems are likely to be resolved with the way you speak. There may be some control between your savings and expenditure, which may boost your bank balance. You may spend money on buying some creative stuff to renovate your house.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today you are advised to control your way of speaking in the family. Your loose talk may affect your family relationships. You may spend your hard-earned money on buying some worthless stuff to maintain your social status. It is advised to not keep loose money in your pocket. You may face problems related to ears, teeth, and throat.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today is a good day for you. You have good vitality and health. You may enjoy your work. Your domestic life may also be good. Healthy partnerships will give you benefits in terms of business. Job seekers will find suitable work. Lovebirds must avoid discussions on self-respect.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today you must control your way of speaking. You should be careful in terms of hidden enemies and opponents. You may be a victim of conspiracy. It is advised to avoid investments in risky assets. You must avoid lending money to anyone as it may not be recoverable easily. It is advised to do meditation and yoga to come out from stress.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today you will be a victim of negative thoughts. Impatient nature and arrogance will push you back from taking hard decisions. You will be in need of help from your elders, which will help you to grow into your work front. You should avoid making investments in dead assets. Lovebirds should avoid discussing bad moments.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today you are in a winning position against your opponents and hidden enemies. Your money which was stuck may be recovered today. You may perform your best at work. It will be an important day for lovebirds and singles to take decisions in terms of marriage.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today is a good day for you. Last week's crunch is over now. You may re-initiate your postponed projects. You may get rewards for your hard work, which may boost your confidence. There are some gains in your business, which may boost your finances. Those related to export and import, fashion, dairy products may do well.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today you may feel dull. You may have health issues. Overworking your mind can make you tired. It may affect your domestic harmony. You may arrive late to a social or family get-together. Losses may be possible in business. It is advised not to invest in any new business. Lovebirds must avoid controversies.

KIDZONE

Daksh Dobhal, 8 Years, Geethanjali Vidyalaya

SA Shreyas, 6 Years, Kensri School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No.4, KSCCF Compound, Pampa Maha Kavi Road, Chamrajpet, Bengaluru 560 018; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
The ratio of 33 & 55 =3:5, if we subtract 9 with 33 &55 result.is 24 & 46. (12×2)=24 (23×2)=46.so, ratio 12:23 , ans is 33 & 55.

BULL'S EYE
lowly, oily, willow, WILLOWY

STRIKE OUT

R	H	O	M	B	S	■	R	O	A	M	E	D	E	■
A	L	■	U	■	G	A	P	■	O	■	I	■	E	■
B	A	D	E	G	G	■	J	E	■	E	V	E	S	■
B	■	H	■	■	A	S	A	N	■	■	I	■	O	■
L	E	A	■	A	R	C	H	■	■	S	N	O	W	■
E	■	T	I	L	T	H	■	L	O	G	A	N	■	■
■	G	■	■	A	■	M	■	S	■	■	C	■	■	■
G	E	N	D	E	R	■	P	I	C	K	E	D	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
F	A	I	R	■	E	M	U	L	A	T	E	D	■	■
R	U	■	H	■	R	■	P	■	I	■	N	■	■	■
H	■	S	■	E	■	E	N	■	A	■	■	■	■	■
I	S	O	L	A	T	E	S	■	O	K	R	A	■	■
N	■	A	■	L	■	S	■	H	■	E	■	■	■	■
P	A	T	I	N	A	■	O	C	T	A	V	E	■	■
■	R	■	F	A	B	■	■	■	■	E	■	■	■	■
K	Y	O	T	O	■	■	S	L	A	S	H	■	■	■
D	■	■	■	S	O	S	■	■	■	A	■	■	■	■
G	E	N	D	E	R	■	P	I	C	K	E	D

Emma Watson did walk off the sets! Corroborating a longstanding report that Emma Watson walked off the set of 2013 comedy 'This Is the End', actor Seth Rogen confirmed the rumour is true. In an interview, Rogen said Watson did refuse to shoot a scene

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Surprise talent

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said he did not know about Minister for Cooperation ST Somasekhar's acting talent. "I came to know my colleague Somasekhar has acted in the movie Kasina Sara only after attending the audio launch of this movie. I am eagerly waiting to watch the film to see his acting skills," said Bommai after launching the audio at Dr BR Ambedkar Bhavan on Friday.

The Chief Minister made it clear that he did not know how to act. "I do not know how to act in movies and also in real life," he said.

Appreciating director K Nanjunda Gowda for selecting a good title, he said that he has known Gowda for more than 25 years. "I think this movie is about women and farmers in rural areas," he said.

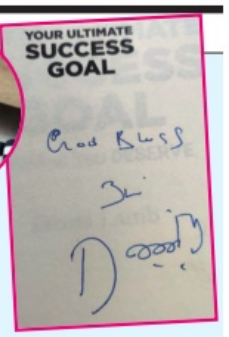
It is learnt Somasekhar has played a cameo role in the movie. Vijaya Raghavendra and Harshika Poonacha are the lead pair in this movie while veteran actress Umashree plays a pivotal role. "I am lucky to play a farmer in Kasina Sara. Director Gowda sir made our work easy as he is aware of agriculture," said Vijaya Raghavendra. Harshika Poonacha, while thanking the director and hero for their guidance during the shooting, became emotional while recalling her father's untimely death due to coronavirus.

Superstar's blessings

Ramachandra Vaidya is on Cloud nine after receiving a boost from superstar Rajnikanth. Vaidya debuts as a director in Sandalwood with Ondanke Kaadu which is being made in Telugu as Anaganaga Oka Adavi.

It is said that Rajinikanth came to know about Vaidya's maiden movie through the latter's friend. Rajinikanth blessed the bilingual movie by gifting him a book, Your Ultimate Success Goal, with his autograph.

After receiving the book, Vaidya got emotional. "The book fills the optimistic thoughts in the reader's mind and this is the best ever blessing that I can ever get from a person like Rajinikanth," says Vaidya.



He said the movie is based on a real life incident. "We completed the shooting of this movie in 35 days at unique locations in Dandeli, Karwar and Sirsi including pristine forests of Western Ghats. The specialty of the location is the roots of the trees which look like Kannada number 1 (ondanke)," the director said.

He said that he directed 500 episodes of a tele serial for Zee Kannada channel.

Compliment taken

Saba Azad is all gaga for Sussanne. But then, aren't we all?

Hrithik Roshan's current girlfriend Saba Azad and his ex-wife Sussanne Khan share a great bond and their recent interaction on social media is proof! Sussanne took to her Instagram handle to share a stunning selfie where she is seen looking gorgeous as ever in a black outfit.

Her matching earrings, kohled eyes and pink lips complemented her overall stylish look. She captioned the post, 'Note to self…Relentlessly…Push yourself further. P.S Thank you Universe for being my seat belt..' As soon as she shared the photo, her friends and family showered love in the comment section. While her beau Arslan Goni dropped fire emojis on the post, Farah Khan Ali shared heart emojis. Saba Azad also took to the comment section and wrote, 'Soooooo prettyyyy my sooz'. Replying to her, Sussanne wrote, '@sabazad thankkk u saboo'.

While one of her followers called her, 'Gorgeous inside out', another one wrote, 'Stunnning stunning stunning.' A fan also commented, 'U always looks fab (sic).'

Hrithik and Sussanne parted ways in 2014. However, they still maintain a cordial relationship with each other. The ex-couple also co-parent their sons – Hrehaan and Hridhaan.

On the work front, Hrithik will next be seen in Siddharth Anand's 'Fighter' co-starring Deepika Padukone and Anil Kapoor.

Wedding details for you

Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani are all set to get married within a couple of days. Their respective family members and close friends from the industry such as Karan Johar, Shahid Kapoor and others have already started arriving in Jaisalmer to attend the wedding festivities. According to the reports, most of the guests will be arriving on February 5 for the pre-wedding festivities. Special arrangements have been made to welcome the guests at the Suryagarh Palace. The sangeet function is expected to take place in the second half of February 5 and the couple's family members and friends are set to perform at the venue.

Siddharth and Kiara are going to get married after dating for 3 years. Jared Kushner, son-in-law of former US President Donald Trump, had come here for a wedding.

Now as per the latest update, the security of the Ambani family was seen gathering at the Jaisalmer airport ahead of their arrival.

The couple's respective family members and close friends from the industry such as Karan Johar, Shahid Kapoor and others have already started arriving in Jaisalmer to attend the wedding festivities.

After sangeet, the soon-to-be married couple will have their mehendi and haldi ceremony and it will followed by a party in the evening. Sidharth and Kiara will exchange their wedding vows on February 6 and there will be a reception for the guests on the same day.

— ETimes & Agencies

Glittery glam

Pooja Hegde has been dropping stylish glimpses from her brother, Rishabh Hegde's wedding festivity and the internet is in awe of her glam game! Recently, Pooja posted a series of pictures from a sundowner Haldi ceremony.

Decked in a glittering beige lehenga for the celebration, Pooja accessorized her look with a stunning choker, kadas and statement earrings with pearl drops. The actress posed against the swimming pool of the rooftop venue and dished out massive style goals. Announcing her brother's wedding, Pooja had shared, "My brother got married to the love of his life! What a rollercoaster of a week it was! I have cried happy tears and laughed like a child. Anna, as you step into the next phase in your life, i hope you LOVE uncontrollably, GIVE with all your heart and find PEACE and understanding in each others presence. @shivanis09, you beautiful bride, welcome to the family."

—ETimes